

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the issues raised in the above referenced Office Action is respectfully solicited.

There is no indication that the originally filed formal drawings have been approved. Confirmation that the drawings are approved is respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's courtesy extended during a telephone interview of November 23, 2004. The telephone interview discussed the prior art and Applicants' Claim 1, but did not lead to an agreement. Further, uncited U.S. Patent Nos. 3 797 836 and 6 446 978 were mentioned by the Examiner as being of some relevance with respect to the claimed invention.

Applicants appreciate the allowance of Claims 2, 3, 7 and 8.

The rejection of Claims 1 and 4-6 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Terence Nicholson GB 2 235 260 has been considered.

GB '260 discloses a gasket in Figure 3A comprising two metallic disc springs, each of which forms a seal surface.

In view of the rejection, Applicants have amended Claim 1 to now recite that the two coned disc springs are combined while being oppositely directed "in a state where the arc-like curved surfaces do not cross each other". GB '260 does not disclose a metallic seal in which two metallic cones or disc springs are each formed on a seal surface with each having an arc-like curved surface in a specific shape so that they are faced in opposite directions from each other, and the arc-like curve surfaces are combined without crossing each other.

Moreover, the springs in GB '260 appear to be springs with interleaved helical fingers rather than conical springs.

Dependent Claim 4 recites that the "central circulation openings are in axial alignment with each other". As best understood, the openings 9 in Figure 2 of the GB '260 patent are considered to correspond to the central circulation openings. These openings do not appear to be in "axial"

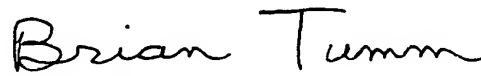
alignment. Rather, there appears to be different openings extending about a radius of the seal ring.

For the above reasons, reconsideration and allowance of independent Claim 1, and Claims 4-6 dependent therefrom, is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amendment and allowance of Claims 1-8 is respectfully requested.

Further and favorable reconsideration is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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